

Arkansas Trails Council
2016 Winter Quarterly Meeting
Saturday, January 9, 2016
Transportation Depot, Hot Springs, Arkansas

Fall Quarterly minutes were approved.

Old Business:

Arkansas Trails System Committee is to reconvene soon and go over the Arkansas Trails System Trails.

Letter to AHTD concerning putting Arkansas' long-distance trails on the Arkansas State Highway Map has yet to be written, however it is not forgotten and will be written.

An update on the planning of the 2016 Arkansas Trails Symposium was given.

New Business:

Steve Schneider from International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) talked about mountain biking access and that mountain bikers "don't want to take your trail," however they would like to make partnerships and help make trails better.

He announced that mountain bikers have been working with the Buffalo National River to get the National Park to allow mountain biking, and there was going to be a pilot project this year at Tyler Bend to allow cyclists on a 6.9-mile loop there. He also said Erbie and Cecil Cove areas were being looked at for mountain biking potential.

Steve also mentioned a few other items:

- IMBA was working on getting a representative group in Hot Springs.
- The upcoming IMBA World Summit would be in Bentonville on November 10-12, and George W. Bush (the former president and avid mountain biker) would be the featured speaker
- Central Arkansas Trail Alliance (CATA) was working to establish National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) teams and events in the Little Rock area.
- IMBA has taken interest in connecting the Ozark Highlands Trails and the Ozark Trail in Missouri and would like to help with that
- The Walton Family Foundation has established a trail crew that is helping to maintain the state's IMBA-designated Epic Trails, and they are trying to establish an endowment so the crew would be permanently funded
- More mountain bike trails are being built Northwest Arkansas, including almost 40 miles in Bella Vista and more by Bentonville
- Other things are moving concerning mountain bike trails in Texarkana, Jonesboro and White Oak Lake
- IMBA might establish an Assistant Regional Director to help Steve in this region
- A biathlon is in the works for Iron Mountain for October

Steve was asked about what position IMBA had on e-bikes (electric, motor-assisted bicycles). He said the Department of the Interior outlaws e-bikes on their trails, however IMBA is neutral on the subject. He said the pedal-assisted versions are sustainable concerning were on the trails.

Ian Hope, North Little Rock Burns Park Ranger, said they have been discussing their use on the Arkansas River Trail. Those that take care of that trail have been “trying to figure out what’s fair for everybody,” he said.

Discussion led to talk about mountain bike use in wilderness areas. Schneider said, “we have enough trails,” however he was for keeping mountain bike use in wildernesses that are being established that currently have mountain biking in that location.

Organizational Reports:

(Part of Steve Schneider’s organizational report is included above)

Jay Swafford from the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest Syllamore and St. Francis districts had several announcements.

- Mountain View had formed a trail coalition, and they are working on creating a trail system that would connect the school, hospital, the Ozark Folk Center and eventually to Blanchard Springs and the Syllamo Trail
- There was a good turnout for the dedication of the Louisiana Purchase Baseline Trail
- There will be a chainsaw training for volunteers at Deer in January
- Friends of the Syllamo have obtained a tool trailer for the prison work crew that is helping to maintain the Syllamo Trail
- IMBA is helping with trail-work training
- Several events in the Syllamore District were coming up including a 25/50k running race on the North Syllamore Trail, the Syllamo Revenge mountain bike race, a new event (?), and the Mountain View Epic mountain bike race to take place in the fall
- Markers are currently being put out on the Syllamo Trail

Jean Wallace of Hot Springs Parks and Trails spoke next and announced:

- Hot Springs had received 3 Transportation Alternative (TAP) grants that include the completion of the next phase of the Hot Springs Greenway, which has a treetop boardwalk and an undercrossing of a street in it; and the creation of the Hollywood Healthy Trail to connect the hospital to the greenway
- Hot Springs has recently completed a Complete-Streets Ordinance and is actively working on implementing it. That came about with the help of a Smart Growth America Grant the city had received to assist with that process
- Friends of the Parks will hold a duathlon (run, bike) on Memorial Day

Bert Turner of Arkansas Master Naturalists spoke about fixing and extending trail and mountain biking in schools.

Frank Wimberly from Heber Springs and the Greers Ferry Lake Trails Council (GFLTC) talked about several items:

- A half-of-mile of chat surface was added to the greenway they are creating there
- The GFLTC has finalized three easement agreements for connecting their greenway trail and close on finalizing three more easements
- They are looking to develop mountain bike trails in their area
- U.S. Corps of Engineers is establishing an 18-hole disc golf course in their area
- Wimberly has opened an outdoor/outfitter shop in Heber Springs, and they are selling e-bikes
- An Recreational Trail Program (RTP) Grant was awarded to build a bridge and some boardwalk for the greenway
- Effort is being made to rebuild Sandy Beach
- An organized bike ride will take place as a fund-raiser on April 22-23 in the Heber Springs area

Jim Britt from the Arkansas Bicycle Club announced that they were working with the Boy Scouts on conservation, and talked about three organized rides:

- A Greers Ferry to Mountain View ride
- A Lake Ouachita, three-day, self-supported ride
- A March 20th ride in South Arkansas

Kirsten Bartlow from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) had several things to announce:

- She was wrapping up the last of the Watchable Wildlife Trail grants
- She was looking in to establishing more Water Trails including possibly a new lake trail and one on White Oak Bayou
- AGFC's Main Office now has a new nature trail on its property right next to it
- Bell Slough has new interpretive signs
- Bayou Bartholomew Water Trail was getting more attention from AGFC and getting more signs and access
- DeGray Lake now has the Islet's Cove Water Trail
- An Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the St. Francis Lake Association for a possible Water Trail
- The campsite along the Wattensaw Bayou Water Trail was finished and has already started to be used
- She is looking into a possible "urban" water trail designation for Fourche Creek in Little Rock
- She is also looking for volunteers to help with the water trails

North Little Rock Burns Park Ranger Ian Hope spoke about a few things:

- The recent Burns Park flood reach a 68-year high

- They will be conducting the third year of burns there
- The park is putting out new signage and maps
- The Arkansas River Trail Foundation has bought North Little Rock a trail sweeper to clean up after floods
- Pfeifer Loop Trail needs a lot of attention after this recent flood

Toby Von Rembow from Arkansas Natural Heritage just had a few things to announce:

- New interpretive panels have been put up at Devil's Eyebrow Natural Area
- New land has been purchased to expand Devil's Eyebrow Natural Area
- Byrd Lake Natural Area trail has been completed
- There is potential for a trail at Devil's Eyebrow Natural Area

Ralph Butler from Ouachita Mountain Hikers (OMH) and Friends of the Ouachita Trail (FoOT) said that OMH helped with Ouachita State Park with a trail reroute

Tom Ledbetter, the Ouachita National Forest Trails Coordinator talked about an RTP grant they received and some new signing for the trails

Bo Lea spoke a little about some FoOT projects:

- The shelter project on the Ouachita Trail (OT) will be finished this year
- Ouachita Challenge mountain bike race, which is a major fund raiser for FoOT, will take place on the first weekend in April
- 1000-miles of the OT is IMBA-designated Epic
- They are trying to raise a \$1,000,000 endowment for the OT and have \$480,000 right now in pledges

Glenn Wortham from OMH and FoOT said that the info written in the logs about the shelters is positive

Arkansas Trails Council Chair Debbie Doss from the Arkansas Canoe Club and the Arkansas Water Trail Partnership also announced a few things:

- She and Kirsten Bartlow are working on a few more water trails
- Arkansas has the potential to have the best water trails in the country
- The whitewater crowd has been very happy this year with the higher water levels in the rivers
- Work is continuing to establish a floating campsite on the Little Maumelle River

Mike Reed, Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT) Board Member, also announced a few things:

- Professional-quality maps of the east side of the OHT have been finished and are now online and in stores
- The trail in Hurricane Wilderness has been rehabbed and signs have been put in
- A reroute is being created near the Richland Creek area because of a recent landslide
- Volunteers helped build a hiking bridge at Grinder's Ferry on a new stretch of the OHT

- The stretch of trail between Tyler Bend/Grinder's Ferry and Highway 14 has 11 miles on the western side done and 11 miles on the eastern side done, however 5 miles in the middle are still to be completed. The holdup is for archeological sites and a small stretch of private property. It is hoped that the whole trail can be completed this year.

Meeting was adjourned

Arkansas Trails Council
 Winter Quarterly Meeting
 Sign-in List
 10:00 am, Saturday, January 9, 2016
 Transportation Depot, Hot Springs, Arkansas

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation or Activity of Interest</u>	<u>Email</u>
Kirsten Bartlow	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC)	kirsten.bartlow@agfc.ar.gov
James Britt	Arkansas Bicycle Club (ABC)	jobritt@sbcglobal.net
Ralph Butler	Ouachita Mountain Hikers (OMH) & Friends of Ouachita Trail (FoOT)	rgbutler39@yahoo.com
Janis Cook		
Debbie Doss	Arkansas Water Trails	
Jim Gifford	FoOT & OMH	hike.arkansas@gmail.com
Darrel Hill	DL Arkansas Master Naturalists & ABC Hikers & OMH	drrhill@yahoo.com
Ian Hope	North Little Rock Park Ranger	ihope@nlr.ar.gov
Bo lea	FoOT	bolea66@gmail.com
Tom Ledbetter	USFS Ouachita National Forest	tledbetter@fs.fed.us
Michael Reed	Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA)	mereed@runbox.com
Erin Rushing	Alta Planning	erinrushing@altaplanning.com
Steve Schneider	International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)	steve.schneider@imba.com
Mike Sprague	Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT)	michael.sprague@arkansas.gov
John Stettinius	ABC Hot Springs Village Biking	gjstett1@gmail.com
J. Swafford	USFS Sylamore Ranger District	jswafford@fs.fed.us
Bert Turner	Central Arkansas Master Naturalists	bert_turner@att.net
Ken Vest		kkv958@gmail.com
Mary Ann Vest	Road Biking	maryannvest@gmail.com
Toby Von Rembow	Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC)	toby@arkansasheritage.org

Jean Wallace	City of Hot Springs	jwallace@cityhs.net
Frank Wimberley	Greers Ferry Lake Trails	frankwim@sbcglobal.net
Glenn Wortham	OMH & FoOT	theworthams@suddenlink.net